

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 286073

47

ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: NEA:EGABINGTON

APPROVED BY: NEA:EGABINGTON

S/S- MR SEBASTIAN

----- 076503

O 221926Z NOV 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 286073

NODIS

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM AMMAN DTD 22 NOV 1976 QTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 6992

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, JO, SY

SUBJECT: JORDAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS

1. KING'S VISIT YESTERDAY (NOVEMBER 21) TO DAMASCUS RAISES AGAIN INTERESTING ISSUE OF NEXT STEPS IN PROCESS OF DEVELOPING JORDAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS.

2. FROM RECENT REPORTING, IT IS CLEAR THAT RIFAI FAMILY FACTION (ZAID AND ABDUL MUNIEM) PREFER SOME EVOLUTION OF A FEDERATION WITH SYRIA. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME OVER THE LAST YEAR POSTULATED SOME FORM OF FEDERATION WHICH ALSO MIGHT INVOLVE LEBANESE AND THE PALESTINIANS IN ONE OR A NUMBER OF SUGGESTED CONFIGURATIONS.

3. THE PROXIMATE CAUSE FOR THE RENEWED INTEREST AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 286073

SPECULATION IS THE EXPECTED VISIT TO JORDAN OF PRESIDENT

ASAD BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH. THE THESIS IS THAT WITH LEBANON NOW PRETTY WELL CLEANED UP, IT IS TIME FOR SYRIA AND JORDAN TO GET ON WITH THE JOB OF GETTING TOGETHER IN A LITTLE MORE ORGANIZED FRAMEWORK AND MANNER.

4. THE KING'S POSITION IN THIS IS ALL IMPORTANT. HIS OWN VIEWS AS EXPRESSED TO ME OVER THE LAST SIX TO NINE MONTHS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE ON GOING TOO FAR TOO FAST WITH THE SYRIANS. REINFORCING THOSE VIEWS HAVE BEEN STRONG TRADITIONAL EAST BANK SUSPICIONS -- ESPECIALLY WITHIN JORDAN ARMED FORCES AND AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY -- ABOUT SYRIAN MOTIVES. THEY ARE UNWILLING TO SEE THEMSELVES ABSORBED IN A GREATER SYRIA WHICH THEY ARE SURE, GIVEN THE RELATIVE WEIGHTS OF THE TWO PARTNERS, WILL END UP BEING DOMINATED BY DAMASCUS. THE KING ALSO KNOWS THAT MANY OF HIS WESTERN FRIENDS, INCLUDING THE US, HAVE TOLD HIM THAT THEY WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE HIM NESTLED IN UNDER THE SYRIAN WING, OR DISAPPEAR QUIETLY FROM THE SCENE UNDER THE DOMINATION OF SOME FUTURE SYRIAN SATRAP. KNOWN SAUDI OBJECTIONS TO SUCH A FEDERATION ARE ALSO STRONG FACTORS WEIGHING AGAINST IT. ISRAELI NEGATIVE VIEWS ARE ALSO WELL KNOWN.

5. ON THE OTHER SIDE, YOU HAVE KING'S LIKING AND ADMIRATION FOR HIS GOOD FRIEND "ABU SLEIMAN" (ASAD). FURTHER, RIFAI AND HIS INFLUENTIAL FAMILY MEMBERS WILL MAKE A STRONG AND LOGICAL CASE (AS THEY SEE IT) FOR MOVING IN THIS DIRECTION -- THE HIGHLY PERSONAL KING-ASAD RELATIONSHIP MUST BE INSTITUTIONALIZED. KING AND JORDAN HAVE INVESTED A GOOD BIT OF PRESTIGE AND FACE IN THE ENDEAVOR WITH SYRIA. FURTHER, JORDAN HAS ALSO DEVOTED MUCH TIME AND EFFORT IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH SYRIA BASED ON SOME GEO-POLITICAL REALITIES WHICH IT PERCEIVES ARE IMPORTANT; LIKE MOST PEOPLE, JORDANIANS DO NOT ABANDON SUCH "SUNK COSTS" LIGHTLY. KING UNFORTUNATELY, ONCE HE MAKES UP HIS MIND, AS HE HAS IN PRINCIPLE ABOUT EVENTUALLY TRYING TO CREATE A FEDERATION, IS STUBBORN AND DOES NOT FIND IT EASY TO REVERSE GEARS. ALSO, UNFORTUNATELY SUCH EMOTIONAL ISSUES AS LOYALTY TO HIS FRIENDS, GREATER ARAB SOLIDARITY AND PAN-SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 286073

SYRIANISM CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. FINALLY KING FIRMLY BELIEVES HE CAN MODERATE SYRIAN VIEWS AND PERHAPS THINKS ALSO THAT HE CAN OUTDISTANCE PLO THROUGH HIS GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH ASAD.

6. SYRIANS HAVE VERY CAREFULLY PLAYED THE JORDANIAN FISH ON A LIGHT LINE. WE HAVE WONDERED WHEN AND HOW THEY WERE GOING TO LEAD IT INTO THE NET. IT IS NOT IN-

CONCEIVABLE THAT ASAD HAS DECIDED TO TRY TO LAND THE FISH NOW OR AT LEAST GET IT A LITTLE MORE USED TO BEING PULLED IN CLOSER TO THE MAN WITH THE NET IN HIS HAND.

7 GIVEN KING'S RELUCTANCE IN THE PAST TO MOVE TOO HURRIEDLY IN THIS AFFAIR, WE SUSPECT HE WILL TREAT CAREFULLY ANY PROPOSALS ASAD MAY MAKE. SOME HAVE FELT THAT HE HAS NOT REALLY GIVEN THIS PROBLEM EXTENSIVE THOUGHT. A PROPOSAL FOR FULL FEDERATION NOW WILL BE EASIER FOR HIM TO TURN DOWN THAN OTHER MORE CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT PROPOSALS BY THE SYRIANS WHICH OVER THE LONG RUN MAY MAKE A FULL FEDERATION VERY NEARLY INEVITABLE --SUCH PROPOSALS, FOR EXAMPLE, AS GREATER ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND POLITICAL UNITY SHORT OF A FULL FEDERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SOME CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENT NOW TO THAT GOAL. KING OF COURSE REMAINS IN JORDAN. THE KEY. I AM HOPEFUL THAT IN NEXT FEW DAYS I WILL BE ABLE TO SEE HIM AND EXPLORE FURTHER HIS CURRENT IDEAS.

8. WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF DEPARTMENT WOULD PASS ON THIS VERY PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT TO DAMASCUS FOR ANY THOUGHTS IT MIGHT HAVE ON ASAD'S POSSIBLE INTEREST NOW IN PUSHING FOR MORE FORMAL STEPS IN FEDERATING JORDAN AND SYRIA.
PICKERING UNQTE KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FEDERATION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, CAT-B, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE286073
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA:EGABINGTON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: N760008-0415
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761125/aaaaavio.tel
Line Count: 140
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <12 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, JO, SY, (HUSSEIN I), (ASAD, HAFIZ)
To: DAMASCUS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006